

South Somerset District Council

Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment Report

September 2018

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Important Information about the Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (HELAA)

In order to avoid any unnecessary confusion, the Council would like to make the following disclaimer in relation to the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) and any other reports relating to its findings:

- The HELAA only identifies opportunities for housing and economic development on sites which are considered to be suitable, available and achievable/developable. It does not allocate sites to be developed. The allocation of sites for future housing or economic development will be identified through the preparation of Local Plans and Neighbourhood Development Plans.
- The identification of potential sites within the HELAA does not imply that planning permission would be granted if an application were to be submitted. The HELAA is a high level assessment. All planning applications will continue to be considered against the appropriate policies within the adopted Development Plan¹, having regard to any other material considerations.
- The inclusion of potential sites within the HELAA does not preclude them from being considered for other uses.
- Site boundaries are based on the information available at the time of the assessment. The HELAA does not limit an extension or contraction of these boundaries for the purpose of a planning application.
- The HELAA includes sites suitable to accommodate five dwellings or more, or economic development of 0.25ha (or 500m² of floor space) and above. The exclusion of sites from the HELAA which fall below this threshold does not preclude the possibility of a planning application being submitted and later granted. Suitable sites (particularly small sites) for residential or economic development that have not been identified in the HELAA will continue to come forward through the usual planning process, including neighbourhood planning.
- The HELAA does not prevent other alternative sites coming forward for development.

¹ S.38 (6) of Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states: *"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."*

Summary of Key Findings

The key findings emerging from the HELAA are summarized below:

Summary of Key Findings

- A total of 370 sites have been identified and assessed.
- 181 sites have been identified as suitable available and achievable.
- 133 housing sites with the potential to provide 9,271 dwellings have been identified as suitable, available and achievable.
- 24 mixed use sites with the potential to provide 3,269 dwellings and 222,441m² of floorspace for economic development have been identified as suitable, available and achievable
- 24 sites for economic development only with the potential to provide 273,061m² of floorspace have been identified as suitable, available and achievable.
- The assessment identifies sites with the potential to deliver a total of 4700 dwellings in years 0-5.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) provides a suite of evidence that brings together important information related to future housing and employment land delivery in South Somerset. This report outlines the HELAA methodology and findings, including an explanation of the site appraisal process and an analysis of the broad outcomes of the assessment.
- 1.2 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)² published by the Government in March 2014), requires all Local Planning Authorities to undertake a Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) to establish realistic assumptions about the availability, suitability and the likely economic viability of land to meet the identified need for housing.
- 1.3 The PPG requires that the existing and future supply of land available for economic development should be assessed.
- 1.4 The assessment forms a key component of the evidence base to underpin policies in development plans for housing and economic development, including supporting the delivery of land to meet identified need for these uses. From the assessment, plan makers will then be able to plan proactively by choosing sites to go forward into their development plan documents to meet objectively assessed needs. The assessment is an important evidence source to inform plan making, but does not in itself determine whether a site should be allocated for development. This is because not all sites considered in the assessment will be suitable for development (e.g. because of policy constraints or if they are unviable). It is the role of the assessment to provide information on the range of sites which are available to meet need, but it is for the development plan itself to determine which of those sites are the most suitable to meet those needs.
- 1.5 This report updates the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment 2017 (HELAA)³; will inform the update of the Employment Land Review 2017 (ELR)⁴;

² <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/housing-and-economic-land-availability-assessment/>

³ https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/873236/helaa_final_report_feb_2017.pdf

⁴ https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/882701/south_somerset_economic_development_monitoring_report_issue_for_website_100417.pdf

and supports the production of the Local Plan Review and the Council's five-year housing supply⁵.

- 1.6 The HELAA is a technical study, which identifies land with the potential for housing or economic development; and then assesses this land against a range of criteria and constraints. Its purpose is to:
- identify sites with the potential for housing and economic development uses;
 - assess their development potential;
 - assess their suitability for development and the likelihood of development coming forward (their availability and achievability, or deliverability);
 - provide information to assist in identifying whether there is an adequate five year supply of land for housing, identifying potential locations for strategic housing sites for at least the first 10 years of a plan and ideally 15 years; and
 - update a database of sites and their constraints, which can be readily extended.
- 1.7 The PPG makes it clear that the assessment should not be constrained by 'need'. It is therefore important that all potential land is identified in the first instance, providing a thorough audit before further consideration through the Local Plan process.
- 1.8 The HELAA is intended to be a database of sites, that can be reviewed and updated on a regular basis; and to some extent, should be considered as a "live" database of sites within the District. In the context of progressing the Review of the Local Plan, the 2017 HELAA needs to be reviewed and updated.
- 1.9 The HELAA integrates and links to this other evidence e.g. the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and the economic development monitoring and projections. It informs rather than determines the plan making process.
- 1.10 The Council is producing other evidence base documents to support the Review of the Local Plan which integrates and links with the HELAA. The Somerset Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)⁶ derives the objectively assessed need (OAN) for housing; and additional work sets out a complementary target figure for future employment in South Somerset⁷ The current Local Plan states that this annual requirement is 725 dwellings per annum.

⁵ https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/924446/combined_files.pdf

⁶ https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/862544/somerset_final_shma_oct2016_revised.pdf

⁷ https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/890009/long_term_-_final_report_v2.0.pdf
https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/891082/short_term_-_final_report_v2.0.pdf

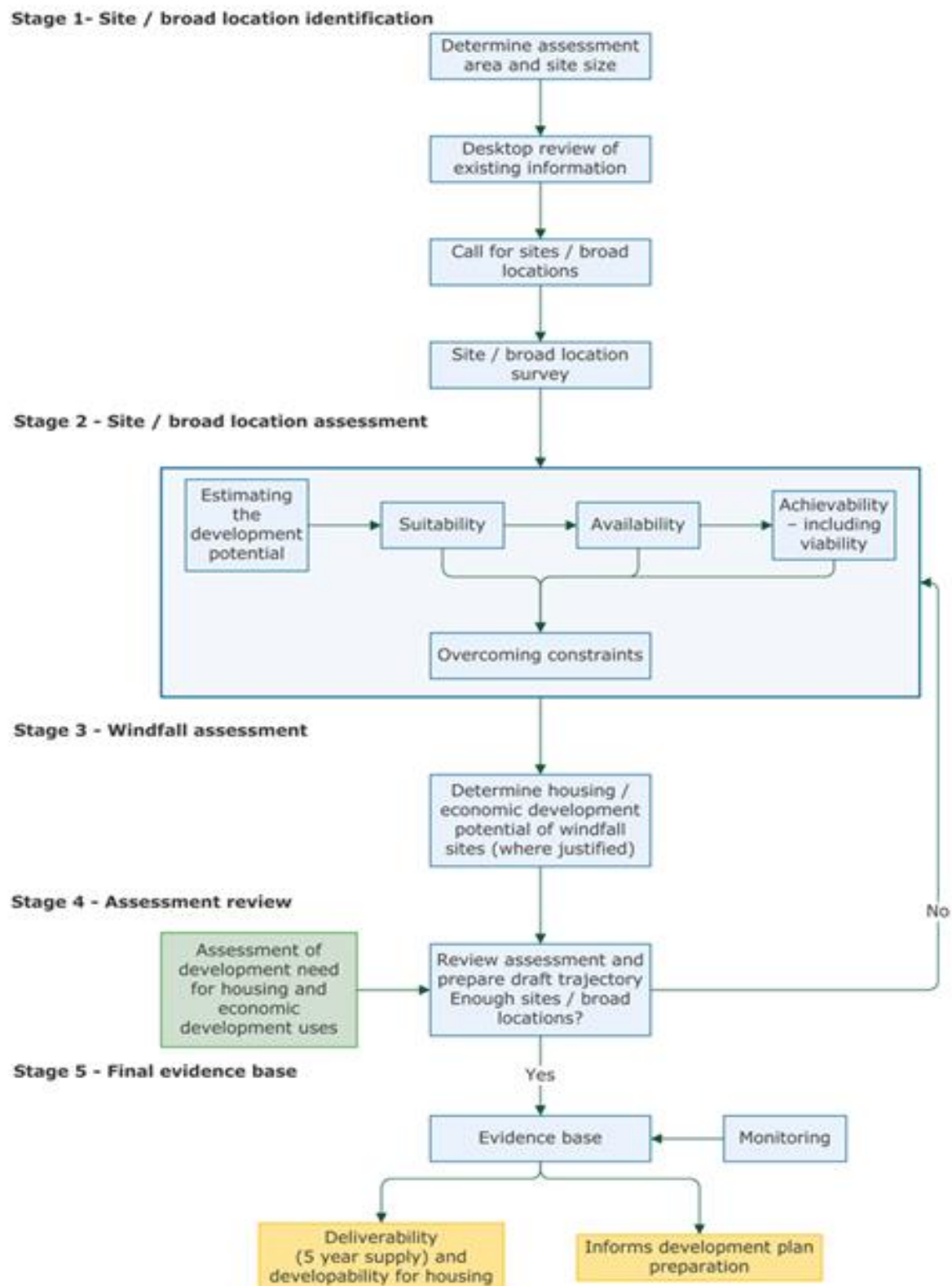
- 1.11 In July 2018 the Government published guidance on a new Standardised Methodology for Assessing Housing Need. As a result of this, the calculation of the annual requirement for SSDC is actually 726 and this figure will now be used following the Review and Adoption of the new Local Plan.
- 1.12 Section 2 of the report sets out the methodology for the assessment;
- Section 3 includes the findings and analysis relating to housing land;
- Section 4 includes the findings and analysis relating to employment land;
- Section 5 provides the conclusion;
- Section 6 the next steps; and
- Section 7 refers to the appendices

2. Methodology

Overview

2.1 The South Somerset HELAA has been produced in accordance with the methodology set out in the PPG. The process is represented in Figure1:

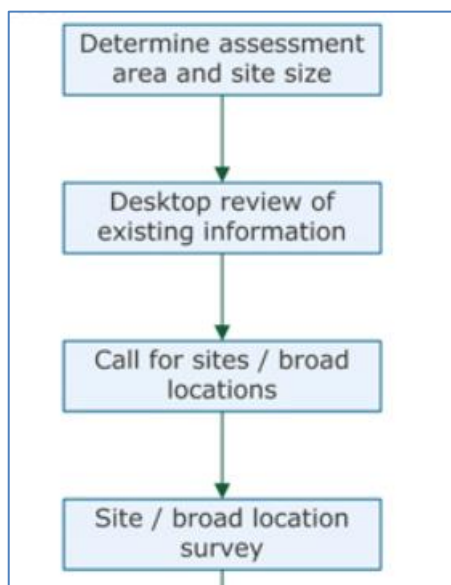
Figure 1: Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment Process



2.2 This section of the report sets out how the assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the PPG methodology.

Stage 1: Identification of sites and broad locations

Figure 2: Stage 1 site/broad location identification



2.3 The purpose of stage 1 is to identify as many sites as possible for housing and economic development use across the District to provide an audit of available land. Once these have been identified, the aim is to gather information about each site to inform the assessment of its development potential (stage 2).

Determining the Geographical Area for Assessment

2.4 The PPG states that the area selected for the assessment should be the housing market area (HMA) and functional economic market area (FEMA). The Housing Market Areas and Functional Economic Market Areas in Somerset (ORS, September 2015)⁸ identifies that the HMA and FEMA for South Somerset is the administrative boundary, therefore the data to inform this assessment has been taken from across the whole of the District.

2.5 Whilst the District boundary has been agreed as the 'best fit', under the Duty -to-Co-operate it is still important for South Somerset District Council to work with adjoining local authorities on cross boarder strategic planning issues through the plan making

⁸

http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/797657/2015_09_29_somerset_hma_and_fema_final_report.pdf

process. In particular West Dorset Weymouth and Portland District Council where the Dorset boarder adjoins the eastern edge of Yeovil.

Determining the Site size for Assessment

2.6 The PPG advises that assessments should consider all sites and broad locations capable of delivering five or more dwellings or economic development on sites of 0.25ha (or 500m² of floor space) and above. Where appropriate, plan makers may wish to consider alternative site size thresholds. The Council has used the PPG advised thresholds.

Call for sites / broad locations

2.7 A previous 'Call for Sites' for the 2017 HELAA was launched in November 2015 and ran until the end of January 2016. The exercise requested the submission of sites that could be considered suitable for housing or economic development uses including:

- Housing
- Affordable housing only
- Plots for self-build
- Care Home/Older Persons Housing
- Offices, research & development, light industrial (B1)
- General industrial (B2) / warehousing (B8)
- Sites for Gypsy and travellers or travelling Showpeople
- Other economic development uses

Identifying Sites

2.8 In addition to the "call for sites", a proactive approach has been used to identify as wide a range of sites as possible. The following sources have been used to identify sites for housing and economic development:

- Existing Local Plan allocations;
- Sites considered in existing development briefs;
- Unimplemented planning permissions;
- Sites under construction;
- Lapsed planning permissions;
- Planning applications that have been refused or withdrawn;
- Land in the District Council's ownership;
- Surplus public sector land;
- Vacant and derelict land and buildings;
- Previously considered sites;

- Sites submitted as 'Omissions' during the Local Plan Review Issues and Options consultation (October 2017 to January 2018); and
- Local Plan Review Option Sites not previously subject to the HELAA process.

2.9 The majority of sites used to inform this assessment come from four South Somerset District Council managed data bases:

- The **HELAA database** which records sites that do not have planning permission for residential or economic development and have been identified through the 'call for sites' or through a desk top assessment;
- The **Housing Monitoring database** which records all planning permissions for housing development and tracks their progress;
- The **Employment Monitoring database** which records the progress of planning permissions for economic development, and;
- The **Uniform database** which records all planning applications and their progress towards a decision including those subject to a S.106 agreement or a planning appeal.

2.10 In total, the 2018 HELAA exercise has resulted in 370 sites being assessed. Of these, 61 are new sites which had not been considered in the previous 2017 HELAA. All the previous sites have been reviewed. The revised NPPF has re-defined what should be considered 'deliverable' within five years, consequently the assessment of some sites has changed from the 2017 report.

2.11 Whilst surplus public sector land including SSDC land has been considered, no surplus land is identified in addition to that already identified. The Council's land has already been transferred and developed by our Registered Provider partners and the remaining land is used for purposes such as a Country Park, recreation areas or car parks or is protected by Section 106 agreements. The land protected by these legal agreements is protected in perpetuity and therefore cannot be used for anything else.

2.12 Each of the 370 sites on the HELAA database have been given a unique reference number which includes an area identifier (N, S, E or W) and four letter parish code e.g. YEOV and a site reference the first two digits representing the layer e.g. 00 for call for sites and the following two digits representing the site number. The sites have also been plotted on maps/layers and can be found at [South Somerset District Council - South Somerset Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment](#)

2.13 Whilst the call for sites sought to identify potential Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites no sites were put forward.

Desktop review of existing information

2.14 Initial site constraint information has been drawn together for each site from the Council's GIS system and recorded in a Microsoft Access database. Designations and constraints recorded are:

- Special Protection Area (SPA)
- Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- RAMSAR
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Historic Park and Garden
- Flood Zone 3
- Ancient Woodland
- Archaeological Site of National Importance
- Derelict Land
- Car Park
- Gas Pipe Consultation Zone
- Area of High Archaeological Potential
- Allotment
- Airfield Safeguarding Area
- Mineral Safeguarding Area
- Conservation Area
- TPO Trees
- BMV Agricultural Land
- Adjoining or within the Curtilage of a listed building
- Landscape study
- County Geological Site
- Contaminated Land

2.15 Other relevant planning constraints are recorded such as the presence of Rights of Way (ROW). The availability on site of utilities such as water electricity, gas and broadband were recorded, where known, as was the proximity to services such as public transport, shops, schools and GP services. The planning history of each site was examined. Whilst the whole planning history of a site has not been recorded recent planning applications or pre-application discussions relevant to the delivery of

housing or economic development have been noted. This information has been used to determine the development potential, suitability and achievability of each site.

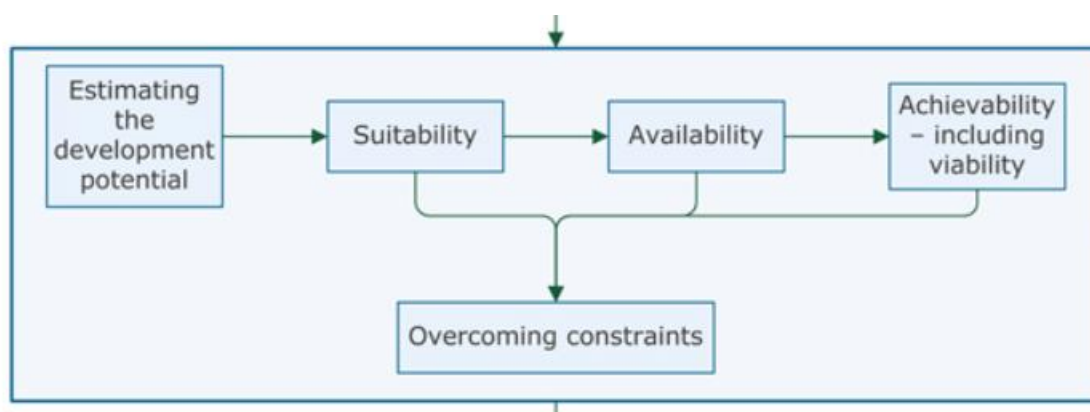
- 2.16 The completed site assessment forms for every site on the database can be found at [South Somerset District Council - South Somerset Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment](#) Assessment forms were completed in accordance with the methodology set out in this document. An example of a blank site assessment form can be seen on the following page:

Figure 3 Site Assessment Form

South Somerset Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment - Site Assessment Form									
1. GENERAL SHLAA year				Additional details e.g. BMV ALC grade, Landscape Appraisal category, any other constraints		Existing pedestrian access/footpaths to site			
Site Ref No		Entered		ID		Within 400m of bus stop			
Parish		Settlement				Frequency of bus service			
Site Name						Bus service information			
Street Address		Postcode				Within 800m of railway station			
Easting		Northing				Within 800m walking distance of:			
Contact details						Convenience Shop			
Total Site Area (ha)		Current Use				GP			
Brownfield/Greenfield		Bad neighbour?				Primary School			
2. SITE CATEGORISATION		Edge of settlement		Edge of business park		Within 30 minutes public transport to:			
Within dev area/settlement		Edge of settlement		No		Hospital			
Countryside		DOG		Allocation		Secondary School			
Boundary Treatment						Areas of Employment			
Surrounding land uses						8. DELIVERABILITY / DEVELOPABILITY/ VIABILITY			
3. DESIGNATIONS AND CONSTRAINTS		Site Topography		Proposed Use		Is this site suitable?			
Category 1:		Historic Park and Garden		Housing		Is this site available?			
SPA		No		Employment		Developable Area			
SAC		No		Mixed Use		Housing (ha)			
RAMSAR		Ancient Woodland		Gypsy / Traveller		Estimated Yield			
SSSI		Archaeological site of		Ownership details e.g. unresolved multiple owners, ransom strips, tenancies or restrictive covenants		@ 30 dph			
AONB		National Importance				Landowner Yield - Housing			
Category 2:		Conservation Area		6. UTILITIES		Panel Yield (final)			
Derelict Land		TPO trees		Water		Site Area ED (ha)			
Car park		BMV Agricultural Land		Sewerage		Landowner ED (sqm)			
Gas pipe consultation zone		Adjoining LB / within curtilage of LB		Electricity		Panel ED (sq m)			
Area of High Archaeological Potential		Landscape study		Broadband		Is the site deliverable?			
Allotment		County Geological Site		7. INFRASTRUCTURE AND PROXIMITY TO SERVICES		Commence 0-5 years			
Airfield Safeguarding Area		Potentially Contaminated Land		Access details		Is the site developable?			
Mineral Safeguarding Area						Commence 6-10 years			
						Commence 11 years plus			
						Is this site achievable?			
						Panel Comments			

Stage 2: Site /broad location assessment

Figure 4: Stage 2



2.17 Stage 2 seeks to establish the development potential, suitability, availability and achievability of each site. This has been undertaken through desk top exercises, site visits and through the assistance of a developer panel.

Developer Panel

2.18 Stage 2 of the process was previously carried out with the aid of a Panel consisting of representatives from the development industry (local and national), local agents and Registered Providers. The Panel's role was to primarily check officers' initial views on the achievability/ viability of sites in the context of current and predicted future market conditions, taking into account the current use value and constraints identified through the site assessment and their own local knowledge and to confirm the initial assessment of suitability. For this update in 2018, a 'Large Sites Survey' was undertaken and conversations held with developers and their agents to ascertain the likely deliverability of sites.

Estimating development potential – developable area

2.19 The developable area is based upon the following assumptions:

Housing:

- Sites of less than 0.4 ha in size: 100% of the site as the developable area;
- Sites of 0.4 ha – 2 ha: 80% of the site area as the developable area;
- Site over 2 ha: 60% of the site area as the developable area.

Employment:

- An average plot ratio of 0.4 has been used for employment uses. This figure is recognised convention used in Employment Land Reviews across the country. This means that on a site of 1 ha, 40% of the site is the developable area.

Estimating development potential - yield

- 2.20 The potential yield for each housing site is based upon 30 dwellings per hectare (dph). This was used for the 2017 HELAA and broadly reflects the average net density across the district of 28 dph⁹. Whilst this basic assumption is applied to sites and is reflected in the “estimated yield @ 30dph” section of the site assessment form, in some instances the Panel previously felt that a site could accommodate more or less growth - this explains why the figure in the “Panel Yield” section of the site assessment form may not always match the estimated yield
- 2.21 In other instances, only part of a site is considered suitable. In such cases the “developable area” and consequently the “estimated yield” has been adjusted accordingly.
- 2.22 For economic development/ employment land, potential is translated into floorspace using plot ratios. A national figure of 1 hectare equalling 4,000m² of floorspace has been used unless a local plot ratio indicates otherwise.
- 2.23 Any local ratio supersedes the national one. Calculations are presented in the site assessment forms.
- 2.24 The Developer Panel view previously superseded both the floorspace figure generated by national and local plot ratio calculations and landowner figures.

Mixed use:

- 2.25 A 50:50 split between housing and economic development has generally been applied, unless the respondent has specifically indicated otherwise.
- 2.26 The assessment criteria for determining whether a sites is to be considered suitable, available and achievable are summarised below:

Assessing the suitability of sites for development

- 2.27 The assessment of the suitability of sites or broad locations for development has been guided by the development plan, emerging plan policy and national policy. Taking this into account an assessment of the suitability of sites was undertaken on the following basis:
- As a starting point sites have been considered to be suitable where they adjoin the development area of the settlement as identified in the Local Plan or are located on

⁹ Paragraph 10.23, South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028), March 2015 – supported by research undertaken in 2011 of existing built development across the District.

the edge of an existing Policy SS2 Rural settlement. Site constraints were then assessed.

- Sites falling within or partly within any one of four international designations have been determined to be not suitable. These are sites falling within RAMSAR, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Scheduled Ancient Monument (AM) and Special Protection Areas (SPA). Site located within wholly within an Historic Park and Garden, wholly within Ancient Woodland or wholly within Flood Zone 3.
- In addition, seven further constraints have been identified which could critically affect the suitability and viability of a site. Any one or possibly two of these criteria could probably be mitigated for, providing a site is of sufficient size to off-set the costs of mitigation, but it was considered that 3 or more “hits” against these criteria would render a site unsuitable. These are not national designations but are significant considerations which would be taken into account if a planning application were to be made and would thus affect the suitability of a site and where the costs of mitigation for 3 or more of these would be likely to render a site unviable. It is possible that other single constraints, such as very difficult accessibility, could affect the suitability or viability of a site and these matters have been identified. The seven constraints are:
 - Proposals for over 200 dwellings within of partially within an AONB.
 - The site is located Partially within Flood Zone 3.
 - The site cannot be accessed in an environmentally sensitive way due to the need for very substantial hedge or natural stone wall removal, engineering works to adjust levels etc
 - The site is identified in a peripheral landscape assessment as having a low capacity to accommodate built development.
 - Unacceptable environmental (including pollution) / amenity impacts to potential occupiers neighbours could occur due to bad neighbour uses
 - Unacceptable impact on the historic environment informed by the Council's Conservation Team.

2.28 Council Conservation Officers were consulted on the suitability of sites adjoining Listed Buildings or within/ near Conservation Areas; and the Economic Development Manager on those identified for employment uses only; their respective comments have been recorded in the “Additional details” section of the site assessment form.

2.29 Sites for new economic development that are not in the identified directions of growth in the Market Towns or Yeovil SUEs have normally been considered suitable through

the HELAA process where they are adjacent to the development area or adjoin part of an existing employment site.

Deliverability and Developability

2.30 Paragraph 73 of the NPPF requires Local Authorities to “identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years’ worth of housing against their housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies”.

2.31 The NPPF, 2018 amends the previous definition of Deliverability and now states:

Deliverable: To be considered deliverable, sites for housing should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years. Small sites, and sites with detailed planning permission, should be considered deliverable until permission expires, unless there is clear evidence that homes will not be delivered within five years (e.g. they are no longer viable, there is no longer a demand for the type of units or sites have long term phasing plans). Sites with outline planning permission, permission in principle, allocated in the development plan or identified on a brownfield register should only be considered deliverable where there is clear evidence that housing completions will begin on site within five years.

The definition of Developable remains as:

Developable: To be considered developable, sites should be in a suitable location for housing development and there should be a reasonable prospect that the site is available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged.

Assessing the availability of the sites for development

2.32 Assessing the availability of a site helps to determine whether or not it can be determined as deliverable in the context of the Paragraph 73 of the NPPF. The most important factor in determining the availability of a site is that the landowner is willing to see it developed.

2.33 In assessing the availability of sites for development the Council has examined land ownership constraints that may be associated with bringing forward sites. This is based on:

- information from the call for sites forms, with an assumption being that if the landowner agent says the site is available and has not identified any ransom

issues, covenants or tenancies that may render the site unavailable, then there is a reasonable probability that there are no ownership issues to prevent the site being developed;

- examining whether a site is in active use and how likely it is for that use to cease and the site to be redeveloped;
- knowledge of whether a site is owned by a developer, has had known developer interest, or was advertised for sale;
- the delivery record of developers / landowners for bringing sites forward;
- whether the planning background of a site shows a history of unimplemented permissions; and
- where sites were identified through the desk top exercise e.g. lapsed planning permissions or register of public sector land or underused land, where possible land owners have been contacted, or the local knowledge of the Panel or Development Management officers has been used to inform the assessment. In the majority of instances. These sites have not generally been deemed deliverable (years 0-5) and therefore would not usually be included in the 5 year supply of housing land.

2.34 Any specific known constraints to delivery identified by the original Panel have been recorded.

Assessing achievability – including viability

2.35 Paragraph 67 of the NPPF states that likely economic viability should be taken into account is identifying a supply of sites. A development should provide a competitive return to a willing landowner and willing developer to enable the development to be deliverable.

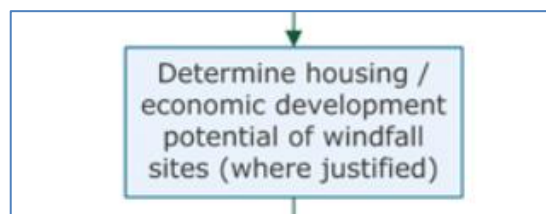
2.36 In assessing whether each site is achievable, account has been taken of adjacent uses, in addition, regard has been had to:

- the known intentions of a developer/landowner relating to bringing a site forward
- previous input from the Panel
- obvious costs that would impact on a scheme's viability (for example a site that had previously been used for landfill will need to be remediated)
- whether a site is in a regeneration area or has support from the Economic Development Manager

2.37 The commencement date for sites reflects the amended definition of what is deliverable within five years in the NPPF 2018.

Stage 3: Windfall assessment

Figure 5: Stage 3 Windfall Assessment



2.38 The Five Year Housing Land Supply paper, August 2018¹⁰ identifies that the Council has consistently advocated that a proportion of its housing delivery occurs through windfall sites. The geographical extent and rural nature of the District, along with the range of settlement types and size, lend itself to small scale sites coming forward with no prior warning. This is particularly true in the smallest settlements in the District, where minor infill plots and single home applications are common place. Similarly, Government's relaxation of permitted development rights and change of use has resulted in additional windfalls.

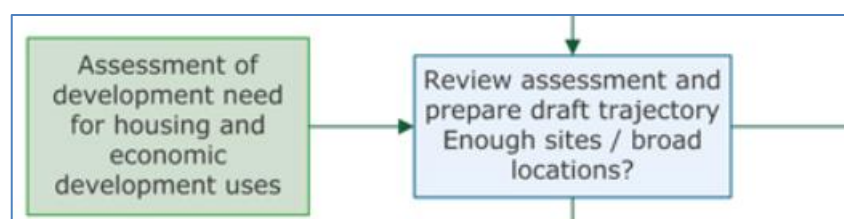
2.39 The Council has adopted a conservative approach to avoid over-reliance on windfalls contributing to supply. The expectation is that the number of dwellings forthcoming will be greater, but the allowance included in the overall supply is 20 dwellings per annum, based on previous trends.

2.40 The consequence is that 100 dwellings have been added to the five-year housing land supply, which represents less than 3% of the Council's overall five-year supply. The Council will continue to monitor the delivery rates of windfall sites and will update, where necessary, the contribution they make to the overall supply position – to avoid under/over reliance.

¹⁰ Five Year Housing Land Supply Report 2018
(https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/924446/combined_files.pdf)

Stage 4: Assessment Review

Figure 6: Stage 4 Assessment Review



2.41 The evidence set out in this assessment presents a snap shot in time and will be updated. Planning applications for housing and economic development uses are continually monitored by the Council and are received and approved or refused permission on an on-going basis. This report and the supporting data base will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Link with Five-year Housing land supply

2.42 The Council has published its five-year housing land supply in August 2018. The Local Development Scheme 2017-2020¹¹ identifies that this will be re-calculated on an annual basis. In accordance with the definition in the NPPF applications with planning permission will be considered firm commitments. Other sites are likely to be put in later years. In this review of the HELAA, some sites may move from being identified as deliverable to later periods in the housing trajectory. Not only has the HELAA been used to inform the Council's five-year housing land supply of housing land; it will also help to continue to inform the plan making process as the Local Plan Review progresses.

Employment Land Review

2.43 This Assessment provides an audit of land for potential future economic development purposes. The intention is to use this site information to inform the emerging update of the Employment Land Review (ELR).

2.44 The ELR update is being completed to inform the Review of the Local Plan. The ELR will assess the amount and type of land and floorspace required to support future economic development uses in South Somerset's Functional Economic Market Area over the plan period. It will also identify those locations where additional land and floorspace will be required.

2.45 The ELR will analyse the existing supply of land through an appraisal of Local Plan employment allocations, an assessment of sites on existing trading estates and

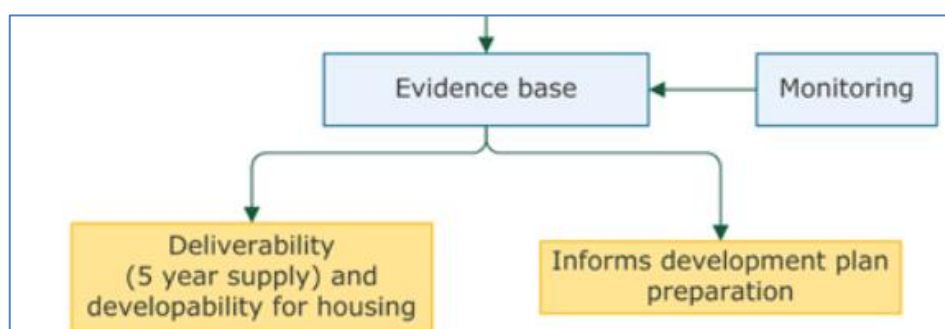
¹¹ [South Somerset District Council - Local Development Scheme \(LDS\)](#)

business parks and an evaluation of unimplemented planning permissions across the District.

- 2.46 Following the supply/demand analysis, the ELR will give an indication of likely gaps in the current supply by location, and it is at this stage that the sites coming forward through this HELAA study will be considered to see if they are suitable to fill any gaps in future provision.
- 2.47 The Council is committed to understanding the need for employment land and floorspace and assisting in the delivery of a sufficient supply to support the business community.

Stage 5: Final evidence base

Figure 7: Stage 5 Final Evidence Base



2.48 Sections 3 and 4 set out the outcomes of this assessment in detail. Table 1 provides an at a glance summary of sites across the whole District.

Table 1: District Wide Summary of Sites

Status	Housing Sites	Employment Sites	Mixed Use Sites	Gypsy, Traveller and Showpeople sites	Total
Suitable, available and achievable	133	24	24	0	181

Source: HELAA Database

3. Housing Land – Findings and Analysis

3.1 This section of the assessment draws together the findings from the data gathered from the HELAA database.

3.2 Local Plan Policy SS1 sets out the settlement hierarchy for the District. Settlements are defined as follows:

Strategically Significant Town: Yeovil

Primary Market Towns: Chard, Crewkerne, Ilminster and Wincanton

Local Market Towns: Ansford/Castle Cary, Langport/Huish Episcopi and Somerton

Rural Centres: Bruton, Ilchester, Martock/Bower Hinton, Milborne Port, South Petherton and Stoke sub Hamdon.

Rural Settlements: Considered as part of the countryside subject to the exceptions identified as part of Policy SS2

- 3.3 Table 2 shows the number of suitable available and achievable housing sites on the HELAA database by settlement type and includes the number of sites, developable area, the number of dwellings¹² and the overall percentage of the number of dwellings.

Table 2: Suitable, Available and Achievable Housing Sites by Settlement Type

Settlement	Number of sites	Developable area (ha)	Number of dwellings	Percentage of overall number of dwellings
Yeovil	18	131.75	3,396	37
Primary Market Towns	31	104.82	2,433	26
Local Market Towns	15	31.39	973	11
Rural Centres	17	29.51	855	9
Rural Settlements	52	66.73	1,614	17
Total	133	364.2	9,271	100

Source: HELAA Database

- 3.4 Table 3 shows that there is a potential yield of a further 3,269 dwellings and 222,441m² of economic development floorspace from suitable available and achievable mixed use sites.

¹² This is the figure in the "Panel Yield (final)" box of the site assessment form which represents the final yield for the site.

Table 3: Suitable, Available and Achievable Mixed Use Sites by Settlement Type

Settlement	Number of sites	Developable area housing (ha)	Number of dwellings	Developable area economic development (ha)	Economic development floorspace (m ²)
Yeovil	12	87.48	2,597	34.51	144,067
Primary Market Towns	5	13.72	493	14.30	64,240
Local Market Towns	3	2.85	86	2.92	11,210
Rural Centres	2	2.0	51	0.05	464
Rural Settlements	2	1.42	42	0.28	2,460
Total	24	107.47	3,269	52.06	222,441

Source: HELAA Database

- 3.5 The details of the individual suitable available and achievable sites for housing and mixed use can be seen on the Site Assessment Forms.

Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

- 3.6 The HELAA has not identified any potential sites for Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople. The Local Plan Review will consider what options are available to the Council in terms of the approach to site provision.

4. Economic Development Land – Findings and Analysis

- 4.1 Table 4 below identifies that a total of 24 sites have been identified as suitable, available and achievable for economic development uses District wide. Of these sites, 12 have been identified in Yeovil, 6 in the Primary Market and 6 in Rural Settlements (1 in Ilton, 3 in Lopen and 2 in North Cadbury). No sites were identified as suitable, available and achievable for economic development uses in Local Market Towns or Rural Centres.
- 4.2 The sites have the potential to deliver about 74 hectares of land and over 270,000m² of floorspace.

Table 4: Suitable, Available and Achievable Economic Development Only Sites by Settlement Type

Settlement	Number of sites	Developable Area (ha)	Floorspace (m ²)
Yeovil	12	45.37	178,427
Primary Market Towns	6	19.89	65,531
Local Market Towns	0	0	0
Rural Centres	0	0	0
Rural Settlements	6	8.62	29,103
Total	24	73.88	273,061

Source: HELAA Database

- 4.3 A total of 24 mixed use sites have also been considered. These sites are different sites to those identified for economic development uses only as those sites have only been categorised for one type of use.

Table 5: Suitable, Available and Achievable Employment arising from Mixed Use Sites by Settlement Type

Settlement	Number of sites	Developable area economic development (ha)	Economic development floorspace (m ²)
Yeovil	12	34.51	144,067
Primary Market Towns	5	14.30	64,240
Local Market Towns	3	2.92	11,210
Rural Centres	2	0.05	464
Rural Settlements	2	0.28	2,460
Total	24	52.06	222,441

Source: HELAA Database

- 4.4 Of the 24 sites that have been identified as suitable, available and achievable for mixed use schemes District wide, 12 have been identified in Yeovil, 5 in the Primary Market Towns (3 in Chard, 1 in Crewkerne and 1 in Wincanton) 2 in Local Market Towns (1 in Castle Cary and 1 in Somerton), 2 in Rural Centres (1 in Milborne Port and 1 in Martock) and 3 in Rural Settlements (1 in Queen Camel, 1 in Sparkford and 1 in Huish Episcopi).
- 4.5 The sites have the potential to deliver over 50ha of land and over 222,000m² of floorspace for economic development.
- 4.6 Taken as a whole, the 48 sites (employment use only and mixed use) have the potential to deliver about 126ha of land and nearly 500,000m² of floorspace for economic development uses.
- 4.7 Half the sites are in Yeovil and there is a healthy supply of sites in the Rural Settlements, although these are District-wide and are in a variety of locations from adjoining established business parks to quite isolated locations. There is a relative lack of sites identified in the Local Market Towns and Rural Centres.
- 4.8 The amount of suitable and achievable employment land available is significantly in excess of that identified as required in the Council's evidence base¹³ as being required, which is about 3-8ha for office development and 42-85ha for industrial development.

¹³ Long Term Economic Forecasting and Implications for Employment Sites and Premises (Hardisty Jones Associates July 2017)

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 This HELAA has assessed 370 sites identified as having potential for new dwellings or land for economic development, including on mixed use sites. Of these, 181 are considered suitable, available and achievable. A total of 4,700 dwellings have been assessed as being capable of being delivered in the first five years.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1 This report will form part of the Council's evidence base. It provides a strong base from which to inform the next iteration of the five-year housing land supply and along with the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (JG Consulting, October 2016)¹⁴ and the Employment Land Review it will inform the Local Plan Review in terms of ensuring that there is a sufficient supply of land available to meet the District's future housing and employment needs.
- 6.2 In the future the database will be up-dated and sites will be added either through a call for sites, a formal request or through a desk top exercise. Given that circumstances are continually subject to change it is entirely possible that a site that is not available now may become so in the future or vice-versa or a site that is currently not achievable may become so.
- 6.3 Additional work to be undertaken includes:
- Completion of the update of the ELR - work has already commenced , together with that on an update of Economic Development Monitoring Report (December 2016). The ELR process will be completed with a review of the existing Local Plan employment allocations and by carrying out an audit of business parks and trading estates. The outcomes of this work together with the finding of this HELAA will inform the Local Plan Review and may have an impact for land requirements.
 - Consultation on the emerging Local Plan Review Preferred Options is expected to commence in early 2019.

¹⁴ https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/862544/somerset_final_shma_oct2016_revised.pdf

7. Appendices

Appendix 1: Maps

See separate document.

Appendix 2: Completed Site Assessment Forms

See separate document.